

Message Text

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ORIGIN NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 NSC-05 H-01 PM-05 SP-02 SS-15 L-03
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DRAFTED BY NEA:SSOBER:BDF

APPROVED BY NEA:SSOBER

NSC - MR. DENEND (SUBS)

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S/S-O:R.PERITO

S-O:R.PERITO

-----121290 070127Z /64

P 070058Z SEP 77
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY TEHRAN PRIORITY

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: MASS, IR, US

SUBJECT: PRESIDENT'S LETTER TO CONGRESSMEN ON AWACS

1. FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF LETTER DATED SEPTEMBER 2 SENT BY
PRESIDENT CARTER TO ALL MEMBERS OF SFRC AND HIRC AS WELL AS
TO SENATOR ROBERT BYRD AND SPEAKER O'NEILL. ATTACHED TO
THE PRESIDENT'S LETTER (NOT REPEATED BELOW) WAS THE TEXT
OF THE "ASSURANCES" AGREED TO BY THE GOI AND WHICH YOU HAVE
PREVIOUSLY SEEN.

2. BEGIN TEXT:

THE ADMINISTRATION WILL RESUBMIT TO THE CONGRESS THE
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PROPOSAL TO SELL TO IRAN SEVEN AIRBORNE WARNING AND CONTROL
SYSTEMS (AWACS) AIRCRAFT IN THE NEAR FUTURE. THIS PROPOSAL
IS A MATTER OF HIGH IMPORTANCE TO IRAN AND TO MAJOR
AMERICAN INTERESTS IN THE MIDDLE EAST. I SUPPORT IT FULLY.
I HOPE THAT YOU WILL JOIN WITH ME IN GIVING IT YOUR OWN
SUPPORT.

IN MY LETTER OF JULY 28 TO SENATOR HUMPHREY, I WROTE THAT I WAS PREPARED, AS HE HAD REQUESTED ON BEHALF OF HIS SUB-COMMITTEE, TO MAKE CERTAIN ASSURANCES IN CONNECTION WITH THE AWACS SALE. I AM CONFIRMING THOSE ASSURANCES IN THE STATEMENT THAT ACCOMPANIES THIS LETTER.

WE SHARE THE BELIEF THAT IRAN NEEDS AN EFFECTIVE AIR DEFENSE SYSTEM; THESE SEVEN AWACS AIRCRAFT ARE A CENTRAL ELEMENT IN IRAN'S PLANNING. THE IRANIAN GOVERNMENT BELIEVES THAT THESE AWACS, IN CONJUNCTION WITH A NUMBER OF GROUND RADARS, WILL HELP PROVIDE THE AIR DEFENSE EARLY WARNING AND DETERRENT CAPABILITY THAT IRAN NEEDS, AND OUR OWN STUDIES SUPPORT THAT CONCLUSION.

BY ASSISTING IRAN IN BUILDING ITS DEFENSES, THE UNITED STATES CAN UNDERSCORE ITS INTEREST IN THE STABILITY OF THE PERSIAN GULF, AND THE REST OF THE MIDDLE EAST REGION. THAT REGION, TRAGICALLY, HAS BEEN MARKED BY CENTURIES OF DISTRUST, INSECURITY AND CONFLICT. BOTH SIDES IN THE ARAB-ISRAEL DISPUTE NOW LOOK TO IRAN WITH RESPECT, AND IRAN HAS WORKED WITH BOTH SIDES TO PROMOTE A JUST AND LASTING PEACE SETTLEMENT. IN PURSUING ITS POLICIES FOR STABILITY AND PROGRESS IN THE REGION AND ELSEWHERE IN THE WORLD, IRAN'S INTERESTS HAVE BEEN LARGELY CONSISTENT WITH OURS.

OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH IRAN IS BROAD; IT BOLSTERS SIGNIFI- LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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CANT U.S. SECURITY INTERESTS AND HELPS TO ASSURE THE UNINTERRUPTED FLOW OF OIL TO AN ENERGY-SHORT WORLD. OUR ENGAGEMENT IN DEVELOPING IRAN'S CIVILIAN ECONOMY IS OF DAILY IMPORTANCE TO OUR OWN MANUFACTURERS AND FARMERS. OUR CLOSE ASSOCIATION WITH IRAN, OVER THREE DECADES, HAS BEEN OF SUBSTANTIAL IMPORTANCE TO THE UNITED STATES. OUR COOPERATION IN HELPING IRAN MODERNIZE ITS ARMED FORCES IS PART OF THIS RELATIONSHIP.

THE GOVERNMENT OF IRAN HAS ADVISED US THAT IT ENDORSES THE ASSURANCES WHICH WE OFFER THE CONGRESS ON AWACS, AND THAT IT WILL ASSIST US TO THE VERY BEST OF ITS ABILITY IN APPLYING RIGID STANDARDS OF PROTECTION FOR THE AWACS AND ITS SUB-SYSTEMS. I NOTE THAT IRAN HAS ALWAYS THOROUGH LY PROTECTED THE MILITARY EQUIPMENT ACQUIRED FROM THE UNITED STATES.

BECAUSE OF THE IMPORTANCE OF THIS PROPOSED SALE, IT DESERVES THE CAREFUL CONSIDERATION THAT CONGRESS IS GIVING. I ASSURE YOU THAT THE ADMINISTRATION WILL CONTINUE TO COOPERATE WITH YOU IN EVERY WAY AS YOU CONDUCT YOUR DELIBERATIONS. END TEXT.

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